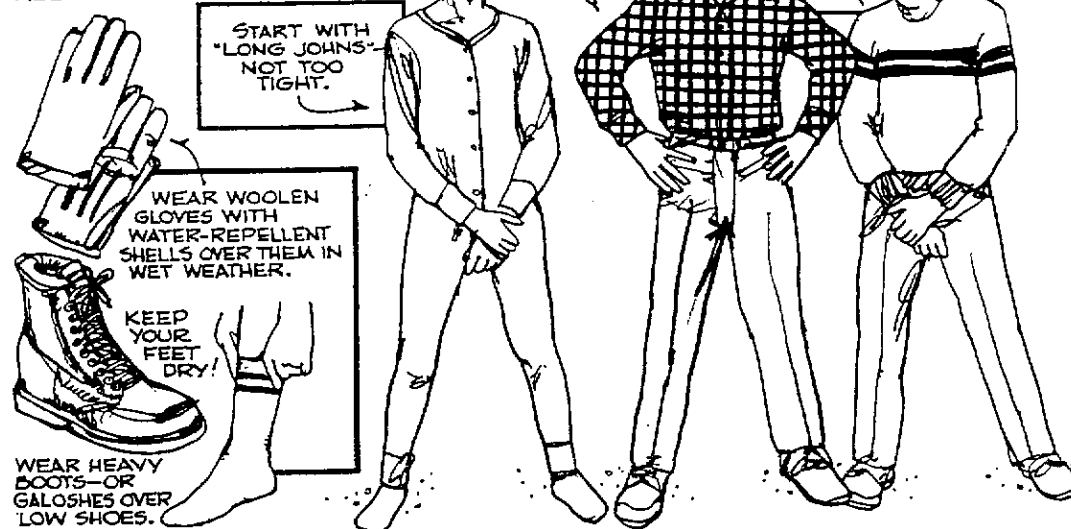


WINTER CAMPING

CLOTHING FOR WINTER CAMPING

IN COLD WEATHER, WEAR LOOSE FITTING CLOTHES IN LAYERS OR "SHELLS". KEEP IT DRY!



Say the word "camp" and most Scouts and Scouters will conjure up an image of sunny skies, the balmy air of spring or fall or the heat of summer, and lots of outdoor fun.

But there's plenty of fun in winter outings, too. Admittedly conditions can be rough, especially in the northern states when snow blankets the ground and temperatures dip into the 20s or lower. Curiously, though, your troop is likely to remember with pleasure the outings when the Scouts overcame cold, wet, and mud and had a memorable time anyway.

Winter camping is one thing in northern Minnesota or Maine, quite another in Florida, southern California, or Hawaii. Adapt the suggested program on these pages to your climate and conditions. In warm weather climes, troops may want to concentrate on wet-weather skills instead of those highlighted here.

The troop meeting plans on the opening page call for instruction and practice in the skills required to be comfortable and safe while in camp during low-temperature periods when snow may be on the ground. The primary resource is the *Fieldbook*.

The importance of being prepared is stressed because the winter environment is unforgiving. In summer, if a Scout forgets to bring extra socks and underwear on a camp-out, it's no big deal. But in winter, such forgetfulness is serious because of the danger of getting wet and having no change of dry clothes. Being cold and wet could reduce the body's core temperature, leading possibly to hypothermia.

The big event will, of course, be a Cool Camp-out. If your troop has a lot of young Scouts, consider choosing a site that has access to cabins or other shelters in case the weather gets beyond their capabilities.

SCOUTING OUTCOMES

This month's patrol and troop activities should give your Scouts:

- The self-confidence that comes with knowing that they can take care of themselves in adverse conditions.
- Growing resourcefulness in learning to deal with difficulties.
- Esprit de corps from having worked together to defeat the elements.

ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

By the end of the month, all Scouts should have the Camping skill award, provided that they have camped out at least once before. They may also complete all or part of the following skill award requirements:

Cooking: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Hiking: 1, 2, 6

Merit Badges. Scouts who concentrate on the Camping merit badge this month should be able to complete all but the last two requirements. They may also do requirements for the Backpacking, Cooking, Hiking, Skating, Skiing, and Wilderness Survival merit badges.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

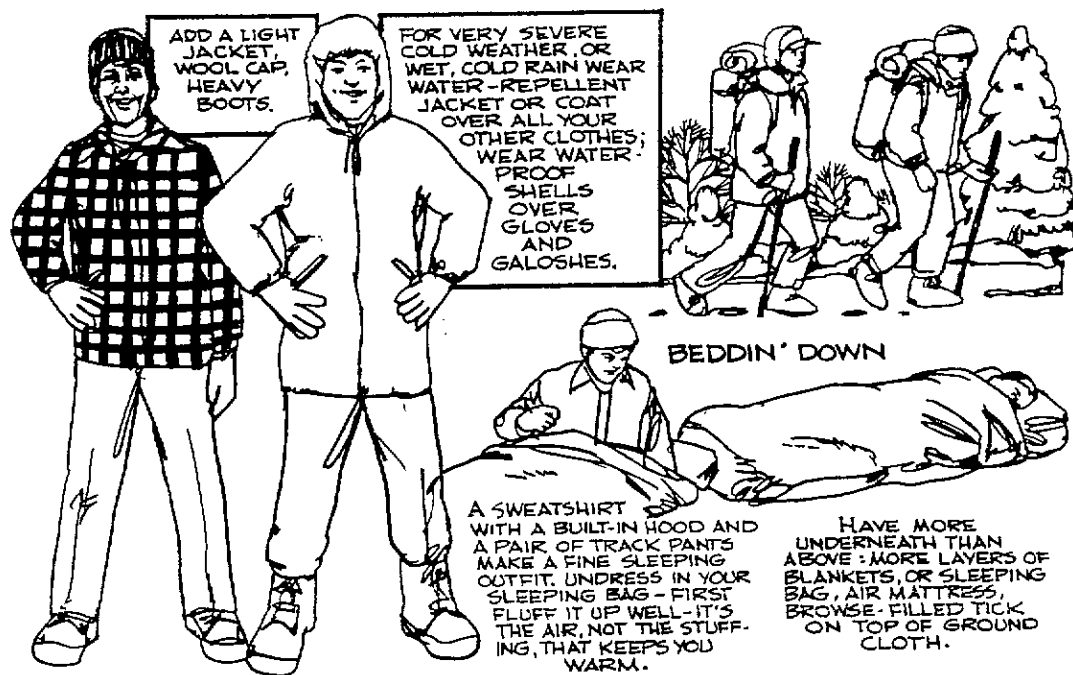
The patrol leaders' council can involve parents by:

- Asking qualified dads to assist with instruction for the Camping skill award.
- Inviting dads on the Cool Camp-out.
- Asking parents to provide transportation to the campsite.

PATROL LEADERS' COUNCIL

The PLC should meet about the middle of the previous month to plan troop activities for this program feature. If you don't complete all the items on the following suggested agenda, continue your planning at PLC meetings following each troop meeting.

- Choose a campsite for the Cool Camp-out. If permissions will be needed, assign someone to secure them.
- Review winter camping skills. See the *Fieldbook* and Camping merit badge pamphlet.
- Inventory the troop's camping equipment. Check condition of tents, flies, stoves, tools. If repairs or replacements are needed, ask the troop committee for help.
- Plan activities for the camp-out—games, contests, skills instruction, etc. But avoid sweating from overexertion because clothes will become damp and unable to keep the wearer warm.
- Plan details of troop meetings for the month. Consider inviting Camping, Wilderness Survival, and First Aid merit badge counselors to help with instruction.
- Hold a junior leader training session on "evaluating" (*Official Scoutmaster Handbook*).



FEATURE EVENT COOL CAMP-OUT

Choose your campsite with regard to the experience of your troop, especially if low temperatures can be expected. If it's reasonable to anticipate temperatures in the 20s or below and you have a lot of first-time winter campers, it might be a good idea to camp near some cabins or other buildings in case of really severe weather.

But don't pamper the Scouts by planning a cabin camp. Even the beginning campers will enjoy the challenge of tent camping in winter and learning how to be comfortable in adverse conditions.

The patrol leaders' council should take extra care in preparing for the camp-out. Make sure that all Scouts know how to dress properly, how to pitch a tent for maximum protection from the wind, and how to recognize signs of frostbite and hypothermia, the chief dangers in a winter camp. Don't let anybody leave the site without at least one buddy accompanying him in case one of them gets into trouble.

In planning activities for the camp-out, the PLC should remember that everything takes longer in a winter camp. Preparing for and conducting contests, making cooking fires, and cooking will take more time. And, of course, it gets dark early, so the fire tenders ought to start gathering fuel by 3:30 P.M. to prepare for supper.

CAMP-OUT ACTIVITIES

Obviously your activities will depend in part on the conditions. Following are some possibilities for a cold, snowy weekend.

- Instruction and practice for the Skating, Skiing, and Wilderness Survival merit badges.
- Hikes and races with skis, sleds, skates, and toboggans.
- Seal Race—Scouts slide on bellies over ice, perhaps using ice awls to propel themselves.
- Snow Snake Contest—Make a track through fresh snow with a car or bicycle; the track may have gentle bends but no sharp turns. Let the track freeze overnight. The snow snakes are Scout staves or handles from old brooms. Object of the contest is to see how far Scouts can slide their snow snakes.
- Establish a snow slide in an area free of trees, rocks, or other hazards. Use inner tubes, Frisbees, old garbage can lids

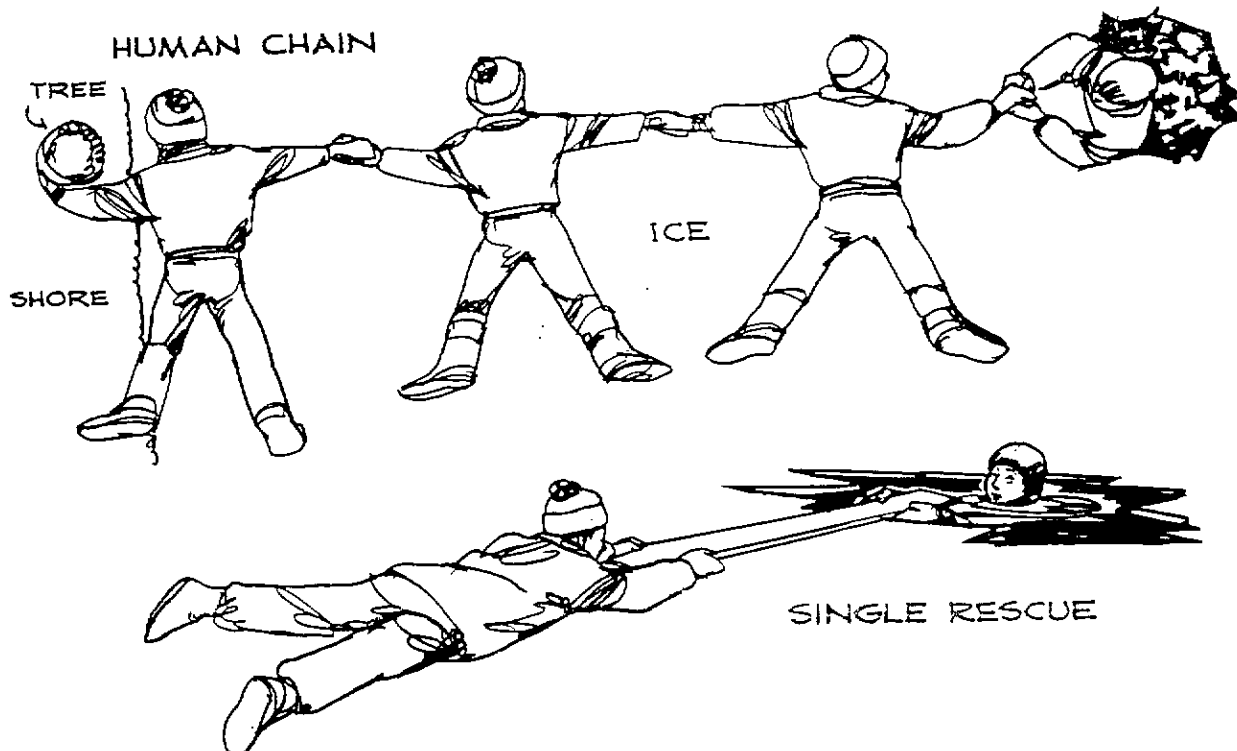
without handles, or heavy cardboard for sleds.

- Have a tug-of-war between two patrols with a wall of snow between them. The losers get pulled through the snow.
- Play Snow Golf—Same as miniature golf except that the fairways are snow-covered and the greens are packed-down areas with an open can buried to its rim. Balls are hockey pucks; for clubs, use old golf clubs, or hockey sticks.
- Follow animal tracks in the snow. Try making plaster casts of the tracks. If the temperature is well below freezing, spray water on the track and let it freeze before casting in plaster.
- Alaskan Serum Race—Each patrol has a sled with two six-foot ropes tied to the front, and each sled carries a "bottle of serum." Four stations are set up about 100 yards apart in a square.

During the race, each patrol member becomes a sled puller. It works like this: to Station 1, Scouts 1 and 2 pull and 3 rides; to Station 2, Scouts 3 and 4 pull and 1 rides; to Station 3, Scouts 5 and 6 pull and 4 rides; to Station 4 (the finish), Scouts 7 and 8 pull and 5 rides. At the finish, Scout 5 leaps off the sled and delivers the "serum" to the "doctor." First patrol making the delivery wins.

COLD-WEATHER CAMPING TIPS

- On expeditions away from the camp, use the buddy system. Buddies can watch each other for frostbite (specks of white on the skin) and make sure no one gets lost or wet, with the consequent danger of hypothermia.
- If a Scout has a cap without earflaps, have him tie a neckerchief or scarf over the ears and cap.
- In wind tie a neckerchief or scarf over the nose and ears and let the point hang over the chin.
- If mittens get wet, use an extra pair of dry woolen socks as mittens.
- Use a wool cap or large woolen sock as a nightcap in cold weather. The body loses lots of warmth through an exposed head.
- For a bed warmer, fill a canteen with piping hot water.
- Tie trouser bottoms over the top of shoes or boots to keep out snow, pebbles, etc.
- Paper (even newspaper) wrapped around the legs, thighs, back, and chest will add insulation.
- Remember that dampness in any form is the No. 1 enemy to



safety and comfort in cold weather. Wet feet are especially bad.

- For an emergency poncho, cut a slit for the head in a plastic trash bag or old shower curtain.
- Don't permit skating by a patrol-size group unless the ice is at least three inches thick. Even then have some rescue gear close by in case a Scout breaks through—an ice rescue cross made of eight-to-ten-foot lengths of two-by-four with 50 feet of line attached; or a ladder or ring buoy with rescue line. Four-inch-thick ice is safe for troop-sized groups.
- Do not eat ice or snow on the trail. It is not pure and it can reduce the body temperature. Melted snow or ice can be used for drinking only after boiling.
- On slippery trail, stay far back from cliff or canyon edges.

COOL CAMP COOKING

If you plan to cook with wood, remember that with snow on the ground, tinder may be hard to find. Smart campers bring it in a tinder bag. Before your outing, gather small dry twigs and put them into a plastic bag. Don't use all the tinder on your first fire unless you know you won't need to make another.

If there is snow or if fallen wood is frozen to the ground, you may have to find dead branches, on standing trees for your fuel. On an overnight camp, gather twice as much fuel during daylight as you think you will need for supper fires. Remember that night comes early, so get started on fires for supper by 3:30. Caution Scouts not to work up a sweat while collecting and chopping wood. Staying dry is half the battle of keeping warm.

Plan simple meals for winter camping. Here are some favorites to feed six to eight Scouts.

SLUM GULLION

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| 3 lbs. hamburger | 4 medium onions |
| 8-10 medium potatoes | 2 8-oz. cans tomato puree |
| ½ lb. bacon | 1 lb. cheddar cheese |

Put two to three cups of water and 1 tsp. of salt in cooking pot and place over fire. Peel, wash, and dice potatoes, add to water, and bring to boil.

While potatoes are cooking, dice the bacon in ½-inch squares and fry to a crisp brown in another pot. When the bacon is done, drain off grease and add finely chopped onions. Then add crumbled hamburger a little at a time, stirring constantly as it browns. Next add the tomato puree and the cheese, cut into ½-inch cubes. Keep over low fire and stir frequently until cheese is melted.

When the potatoes are done, drain off water and add to hamburger mixture. Season to taste.

CHICKEN STEW WITH DUMPLINGS

- 3 envelopes dehydrated chicken noodle soup
- 3 12- to 14-oz. cans of chicken fricassee with boned chicken
- ¾ cups biscuit mix

Put the soup mix in a large kettle. Add four tbs. of the biscuit mix and stir in nine cups of water. Add the three cans of boned chicken, place on the fire and bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. Mix the remaining three cups of biscuit mix with 1¼ cups water in a small pot. This will become a thick batter.

When the soup mix has been boiling about 10 minutes, drop 10 to 12 large spoonfuls of the mixed dough into it. Cook uncovered for about 10 minutes, then cover and let simmer until dumplings are completely cooked (about 10 minutes more). The stew should be boiling gently throughout the cooking time.

CAMPFIRE HASH

- 3 lbs. hamburger
- 8-10 medium potatoes
- 3 medium onions
- 8-oz. can of tomato sauce

Dice the potatoes, put them in a pot with enough water to cover, and bring to a boil.

Mince the onions. When the potatoes are soft, drain them and add onions and hamburger. Mix well.

Grease a large frying pan and put it on the fire. When the grease is hot, add the hash mixture. Brown on one side, then turn and brown on the other. When the hash is almost done, pour on the tomato sauce and heat for a minute or two.